

THE OLDBURY UNITED party will be travelling down from Birmingham this evening and staying at a hotel in Tetsworth, a few miles inside the Oxfordshire border, overnight before tomorrow's Amateur Cup clash at Loakes Park.

Fast emerging as one of the leading lights in Midlands amateur soccer, their exploits of late have sparked great interest around their local area. So much so that B.B.C. Radio Birmingham are hoping to interview club officials before they set off.

And, once settled in their hotel tonight, Oldbury may well be involved in a session for Radio Wycombe, the Hospital Broadcasting service which will be covering the game for patients at High Wycombe and Amersham Hospitals.

Last week, I attempted to give some insight into Oldbury's form and what can be expected

Oldbury whip up local interest in Midlands

of them tomorrow. Now, some more domestic facts about the mystery men from Brum...

The club began life in 1959 when present chairman Sam Warren and treasurer Frank Cooper organised a group of young schoolboys into a side called Queens Colts.

They played in the local Oldbury League and lifted several titles before advancing into the Birmingham A.F.A. and then the Warwickshire and West Midland Alliance — one of the best Midland junior leagues.

Their success put them in competition with neighbouring

Oldbury Town and in 1965 came the birth of Oldbury United when the two clubs amalgamated.

This brought present secretary Tony Grove into the set-up and with Messrs. Warren and Cooper he has done much to lift the club to their present level.

Oldbury joined the Worcestershire Combination, which later became the Midland Combination, and have steadily climbed the Midland amateur ladder ever since.

Remarkably, of the original Queens Colts side, four players have survived all the changes

and rising standards to be still in the present first team squad.

They are skipper Bucknall, strikers Sabin and Jackson and full-back Rock.

The standard of Oldbury's team-work and understanding is a compliment to manager Alan Hawkes and his coach Wyn Bowen who was with Alvechurch when they reached the semi-final of the Cup at Stamford Bridge.

When Mr. Hawkes joined Oldbury two seasons ago he took over a depleted playing strength. Tony Upton, the previous manager, had gone to

Moor Green after a disagreement over policy with the Oldbury Board when he was dismissed.

Several first team regulars went as well to Moor Green, leaving Hawkes to virtually start from scratch.

To have reached the last 16 of the Amateur Cup within 18 months, and under such circumstances, is no mean achievement.

As a player Hawkes was in the Wolves' junior sides before going into the Navy. Later he joined semi-professional sides Redditch, Nuneaton and Banbury before an injury curtailed his playing career while with Lower Gornal.

He took his coaching badges, during which time he met Wycombe manager Brian Lee on a Lilleshall course. Oldbury are his first senior club and he is regarded as one of the "bright young men" in Midland coaching circles.

Welshman Bowen, a good talker and expert analyst of a soccer team, took Wolverhampton side Whitmore Old Boys to the Birmingham County F.A. Junior Cup title two years ago.

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW

UNCLAIMED stand seats for tomorrow are few and far between at present, although some are being received back and will be on sale at the ground tonight (Friday) between 7 and 9 p.m.

The club should also be in receipt of any returns from the allocation given to Oldbury and these will be available on match day from treasurer Roger Lee at Loakes Park (1 p.m.).

Enclosure tickets have been specially printed for the occasion and those supporters who will be wanting to situate themselves in the enclosure are asked, if possible, to buy them beforehand — tonight especially.

This would prevent any hold-ups near kick-off time and help all concerned.

As against Enfield, Wanderers' officials emphasise the need for supporters to turn up as early as they can tomorrow. All entrances and gates will be open from 1.30 p.m.